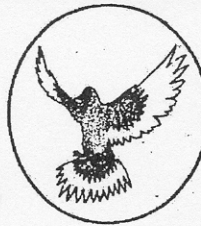


Calexico Chronicle



www.imperialvalleynews.com

COMMUNITY
NEWS!

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 2003

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
CALEXICO, CA.
PERMIT NO. 77

Filner Holds Meeting On Proposed Border Upgrades

By Luke Phillips



CONGRESSMAN BOB FILNER voiced his concern about how the Port Of Entry upgrade is being handled. Filner suggested that community input and architectural concerns should be considered in the designing of the new building and not just the engineering aspects of the project. *Photos by Luke Phillips*



CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS Frank Salazaar and Alex Perrone led the community discussion along with Filner at Wednesdays meeting.

Congressman Bob Filner held a press conference last Wednesday at the Calexico City Council Chambers to discuss the possibility of upgrading and expanding the Calexico Port Of Entry (West) and to receive input on the project from a large group of attending Calexico residents and city council members.

It was suggested by Filner that crossing the border could be a much more quick and pleasant experience with addition of more sentry lanes and better accommodations for those crossing on foot.

"The Bureau of Homeland Security (which the Border Patrol now falls under) is a little confused right now," said Filner, "They think that longer lines and a longer wait at the border means more security, a misconception which I would like to get rid of."

The proposed improvements would cost an estimated \$35 million dollars and according to Filner would boost the economy and growth of Calexico.

Filner also suggested the formation of a committee dedicated to gathering ideas from the community on what improvements should be included in the upgrade.

When one audience member suggested that water misters should be installed at the border crossing Filner replied, "There are a lot of things we could talk about, but instead of coming up with things off of the top of our heads, I suggest that these ideas be put down on paper."

There is still a lot of work to be done by local and federal officials before the project becomes reality.

(over)



HILDY RIVERA CARRILO is interviewed by television news cameras after taking part in Congressman Filner's press conference this week.



A LARGE GROUP OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS was on hand to voice their options on what the new border crossing should include. There are a lot of options on the table for how the new port could be built including expansion of the existing facility or the construction of a second port, with one being used for entering the U.S. and one being used for entering Mexico.